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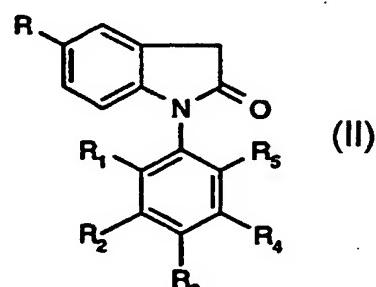
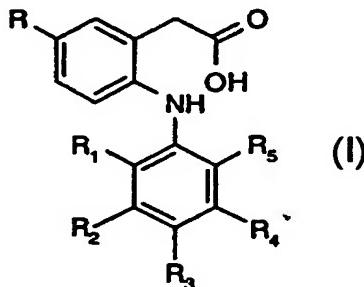
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(57) Abstract: A process for the production of a compound of formula (I), or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable prodrug ester thereof, comprising cleaving a lactam of formula (II) wherein the symbols are as defined, with a base; and precursors therefor and processes for the preparation of the precursors. The compounds of formula (I) are pharmaceutically active compounds which are selective inhibitors of Cyclooxygenase (II).